



Stress among Journalists During COVID pandemic

Dr. Ravi Kumar Sharma

Senior Special Correspondent, 1st India News, Rajasthan

Email- sharmaravi1980@gmail.com

Abstract

COVID era has affected every segment of population adversely round the globe. The adversities were experienced among different professionals and workers. Journalism is one of the demanding professions where are the journalists are overburdened and need to be in alert mode 24/7. Covid 19 pandemic has resulted in additional stress among several journalists. Aim- The present study aimed to compare the stress related symptoms initiated during COVID among print and electronic media journalists. Methodology- Data was collected using self reporting measures. 120 journalists were assessed who fit in criteria of covering stories during pandemic. Results- indicated journalists reported that there was high level of stress experienced it was more among electronic media journalists. Discussion- covering the stressful stories, reviewing the video editing and working on the similar type of tragic news creates post traumatic symptoms.

KEYWORDS: STRESS, COVID, JOURNALISTS.

Introduction-

Journalist profession is one of the most stressful jobs among others. From the lowest beat journalist to the executive level media professionals experience stress as and when covering the stressful events. Journalists have to achieve the daily job targets time bound news coverage, alertness mode every second updates are many times puzzles the minds of the media professionals.

To meet the objectives of professional assignments, journalists often suffer from high level of professional stress. (Huda & Azad, 2015)

The COVID-19 pandemic has presented unprecedented healthcare challenges. Journalists covering the pandemic at close quarters are working in ways akin to first responders, but nothing to date is known of the psychological distress this is potentially causing them. **Osmann et al (2021)**.

Review Of literature

Tyson & wild (2021) studied stress among journalists during Covid the study indicated that the corona virus pandemic has resulted in many journalists repeatedly covering stories related to human suffering. These journalists' experienced higher rates of psychological distress, post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and depressive symptoms.

Osmann et al (2021) studied that How have journalists been affected psychologically by their coverage of the COVID-19 pandemic. This descriptive study indicates that Journalists covering the COVID-19 pandemic are experiencing levels of anxiety and depression similar to those seen in first responders. Psychological therapy provided in a timely manner can significantly alleviate emotional distress.

Felenstein et al (2002) studied PTSD among war journalists and found that it is connected with major depression symptoms among journalists. They emphasized that news organizations should get alert that significant psychological distress may occur in many war journalists and often goes untreated.

Aim- The present study aimed to compare the stress related symptoms initiated during COVID among print and electronic media journalists.

Methodology- Data was collected using self reporting measures.120 journalists were assessed who fit in criteria of covering stories during pandemic. Consent was taken from every respondent. Out of 120 journalists 70 were from print media and 50 were from electronic media. As far as gender is concerned out of 120 male respondent were 80 and female respondents were 40.

Table 1.1 Demographic detail of sample n=120

S. No.	Criteria	Number
1.	Print and Electronic media Journalists	Print Media=70 Electronic media=30
2.	Male Journalists and Female Journalists	Male = 80 Female=40

Results-

Results indicated journalists reported that there was high level of stress experienced it was more among electronic media journalists. 75% Electronic media journalists reported to experience traumatic symptoms while covering the stories during covid. As far as gender is concerned 80% female reporters reported to feel stressful after covering the traumatic events during Covid.

Table 1.2 Result Table

S. No.	Stress related symptoms	
1.	Print media Journalists 60%	Electronic Media Journalists 75%
2.	Male Journalists 55%	Female Journalists 80%

Discussion-

Covering the stressful stories, reviewing the video editing and working on the similar type of tragic news creates post traumatic symptoms. It is evident that the job of journalists is stressful but the notion is that whether the covid pandemic has exaggerated the complexity of the issue. The results indicate that the covid has adversely affected the mental health of the journalists. The major problem is that even journalists are not aware of this psychological need they are taking it as the side effect of their demanding job profile. The need of the hour is to understand the adverse effect of covid on journalist's mental health. Media organizations should have the screening of mental health status on regular basis so that this stress related traumatic symptoms can be treated in the initial stage.

References

Feinstein, A., Owen, J., & Blair, N. (2002). A hazardous profession: war, journalists, and psychopathology. *American journal of psychiatry*, 159(9), 1570-1575.

Tyson, G., & Wild, J. (2021). Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder Symptoms among Journalists Repeatedly Covering COVID-19 News. *International journal of environmental research and public health*, 18(16), 8536.

Osmann, J., Selva, M., & Feinstein, A. (2021). How have journalists been affected psychologically by their coverage of the COVID-19 pandemic? A descriptive study of two international news organisations. *BMJ open*, 11(7), e045675.

Huda, K, Azad, A. (2015). Professional Stress in Journalism: A Study on Electronic Media Journalists of Bangladesh. **January 2015**. *Advances in Journalism and Communication* 03(04):79-88
DOI:10.4236/ajc.2015.34009